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Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 7:07 AM
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Subject: Favoring Equestrian Boarders Must Immediately Stop

Dear Board and CEO,

During the June Board meeting, an announcement was made that the Board would require the rebid of the LWI contract at the behest of equestrian boarders and work to find subsidies for the equestrian boarders. Staff have been pressured to negotiate contract terms with equestrian boarders to reach contract terms which are mutually agreeable with the equestrian boarders and which may not include all the contract terms needed for State contracts or deemed necessary by staff. All of these actions are contrary to how State business is conducted, how our Fairgrounds is managed, and creates financial and legal jeopardy for our Fairgrounds.

There has been an unending series of meetings both in groups and individually with staff to meet the needs of equestrian boarders. These meetings have eaten up days if not weeks of staff time without equestrian boarders ending their complaints.

The EQC has been run as a defacto private riding club for decades where equestrian boarders did what they wanted to do how they wanted to do it. The EQC was public property but the public and staff could not do anything at the EQC unless the equestrian boarders gave permission to do it. Anyone attempting to do something which the equestrian boarders did not want done would be set upon and bullied. The only way to make the equestrian boarders happy is for the public to cede the EQC to them, subsidize the equestrian boarders, and for staff and the public to do as they are told to do by the equestrian boarders. *This is not acceptable.*

The Facilities Committee has overstepped their authority to become negotiators for equestrian boarders instead of sticking to the subject of dealing with infrastructure issues at the EQC. The Facilities Committee may have made commitments to the equestrian boarders which are outside their authority. The Board, led by the Facilities Committee, is now favoring equestrian boarders over all other boarders by rebidding contracts, bending over backwards with contracts and meetings, and allowing equestrian boarders to run the EQC as their private fiefdom. The Board has bent to the bullies and now requires the staff to also bend to the bullies.

The Board has now created legal and financial jeopardy the our Fairgrounds with favoritism of equestrian boarders. There may be other issues of favoritism which are not public at this time but which also need to be ended, If you need me to explain this in a different way, please let me know. Examples of actions leading to legal and financial jeopardy include but are not limited to:

Any renter for any reason can now ask for any service contract to be rebid for any reason including the cost because the LWI contract is being rebid at the behest of equestrian boarders. This means the highly litigious gun show can force rebid of contracts to lower their costs. The term "highly litigious" means they will take our Fairgrounds to court and have the money to keep litigating until they win.

Allowing equestrian boarders to dictate contract terms allows any renter to dictate their own contract terms with staff forced to accept them under pressure/threat from Board members. Standard contracts are used with standard terms with minimal negotiation over dates and resources used to allow all renters to be treated the same. This is done

to be fair and non-discriminatory to renters. Deviating from this model creates legal problems. See prior statements about the gun show.

Eviction notices given to the equestrian boarders were legal and necessary to protect the interests of our Fairgrounds.

Allowing any renter to hold over without a contract allows any other renter to do same. The stance that equestrian boarders should not have left when their contracts ended places the rental model of shows come and go in jeopardy in addition to allowing occupancy without a valid contract. For example, now the gun show could decide to not pack up and leave at the end of the weekend but declares they are now using the space year round and fight a notice of eviction because of how the equestrian boarders were handled. If you let the equestrian boarders hold over after their contract ends, you need to let the gun show do the same.

Equestrian boarders claims that favoritism required for small and women owned businesses do not apply. Repeated loud claims have been made that the Fairgrounds must favor equestrian boarders because they are women with small businesses. This is incorrect and false. This is a misstatement and misapplication of criteria used to award contracts during a competitive bidding process where bids are scored with points. Points can be awarded for certain classes of bidders including small and women owned businesses. Equestrian boarders are renters and have not bid on Fairgrounds contract. This argument is specious and plays no role in this matter.

Favoring equestrian boarders must stop. If equestrian boarders want to use Fairgrounds facilities, they follow Fairgrounds rules, pay Fairgrounds rates, and sign Fairgrounds contracts just like any other renter. If equestrian boarders do not want to do this, they can leave just like any other renter. Equestrian boarders have no inherent right to use the Fairgrounds. There is no “squatters rights.” It is not the problem of the Fairgrounds that there is less equestrian boarding space in our County than years ago or that empty stalls are located more than a 10 minute drive from Lido Isle. **This is not our problem. You bought a horse or a dozen horses and you figure it out.**

A reset back to normal operations between Board, Facilities Committee, staff, and equestrian boarders is accomplished when the Board and specifically the Facilities Committee stops intervening in operational decisions made by staff regarding equestrian boarders in addition to ceasing any and all actions which favor equestrian boarders over other renters or may be interpreted to do so. The Board can then turn their attention to creating public programming at The Ranch in addition to other legitimate Board work.

If you want to get a hold of me, Michele has my phone number.

Thanks,

Reggie Mundekis